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BY CLAY SKIPPER PHOTOGRAPHS BY BEN RAYNER September 17, 2018

The Boston Celtics point guard replaced Kyrie Irving, exploded in the NBA

Terry Rozier, the NBA's





born.

In the summer of 2017, Boston Celtics guard Terry Rozier got a tattoo of the Scream mask. Back then, he wasn't yet Scary Terry, the NBA's unexpected killer. He was just Kyrie Irving's promising young backup, who had started in exactly zero NBA games. Then, last season happened: Irving got hurt, Rozier stepped in to fill the All-NBA-sized void, tore through the NBA playoffs (averaging 16 points, 5

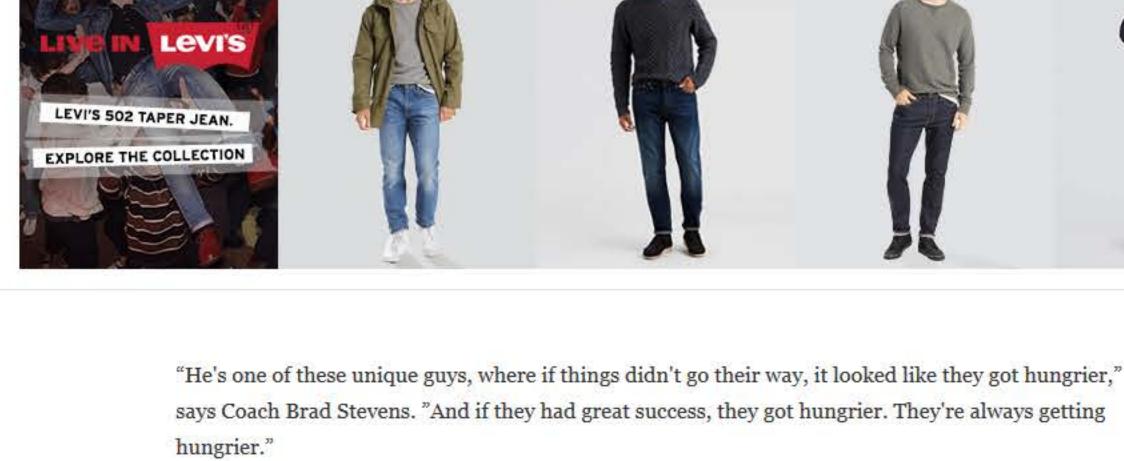
rebounds, and 5 assists), crossed Eric Bledsoe into another dimension, helped get the Celtics one way

than 10,000 shirts with a cartoon Terry Rozier in a Scream mask. The legend of "Scary Terry" was

from winning an Eastern Conference their injury-addled team had no business winning, and sold more

Watching those NBA playoffs back now, it seems predestined. Terry Rozier, 24, was always going to explode at some point. You don't play with that type of cold-blooded confidence unless there's undeniable talent lurking beneath. So it's easy to forget that Rozier was drafted onto a Celtics teams that had no place for him, overloaded with guards (Isaiah Thomas, Evan Turner, Marcus Smart). His rookie season included fourteen games playing for the Celtics G League team in Maine. (Pro basketball! In Maine!) But Rozier wasn't long for the Maine Red Claws life. He plays with a style that seems almost vindictive: he shoots step back threes as if on dares, and attacks the basket with a vengeance that makes you hope the rim's mom ain't watching.

PRESENTED BY AUDI A7



go is Scary Terry," he says.

time you did, it was already too late.

When did you first watch Scream?

was telling me he was nervous.

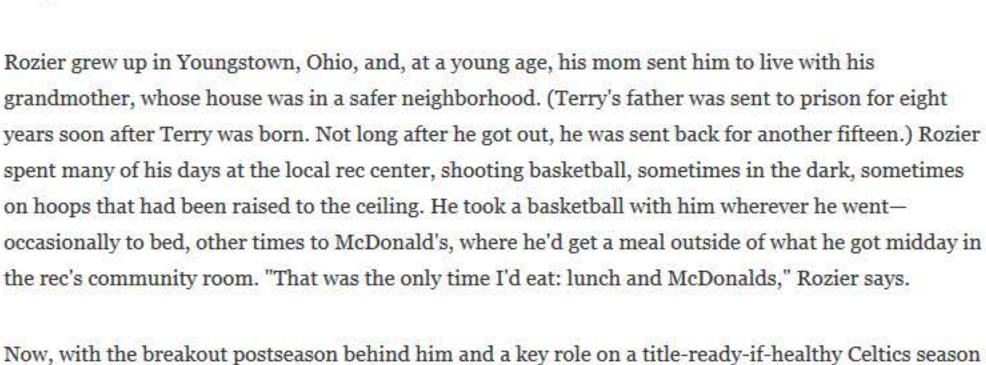
What did you tell him?

I'm going to do with mine.

better?

yourself.

How'd the Scary Terry thing come together?



ahead, Rozier says this is the first summer where he can tell life is changing a little bit. "Everywhere I

Really, Scary Terry was there the whole time. But, much like Scream, you just didn't know-and by the

I love scary movies [and] Scream is my favorite. The way he talks on the phone, talks stuff and all that. [Then] the season plays out, we play Indiana Pacers and I got that last steal and dunk. People started calling me Scary Terry around that time. I was in L.A. and one of the guys in my agency who does

marketing sent me shirts. It had the Jason mask on there. And I was like, "We need to get the Scream

People don't know that I don't really like the name Scary Terry. I like it when the fans call me it. But outside of basketball, none of my friends call me Scary Terry. But I don't want nobody to think it was

mask on there." Then, around the time the playoffs, we started selling them out.

just for that year. I feel like it's kind of my name in the league now.

and the blood come down on your face, or the regular Scream mask.

When I was young I played every sport. I got to enjoy being a kid.

How old does your son have to be before you dress him as Scream? He likes Spider-Man. I let him do his thing. In a couple years I might have to put him in [it]-like, "Listen, Daddy wore Scream, so we're gonna have to get you one." He just started kindergarten. He

I was real young. Every Halloween I was Scream—whether I had the one where you squeezed the heart

Basically I was just like, "You gonna be alright. It's school. Just have fun." I try to let him be a kid as much as I can. I don't like when people take their kids and like, "Alright, so I play professional basketball. I'm gonna take my son and throw him into basketball, be strict on him about basketball."

People be too strict on their kids and take their childhood away. Of course I'm going to teach him life

things—pay attention in school, learn, be book smart and all that. I want to teach him life, and let him

live. I don't judge nobody on how they raise their kids or what they do with their kids. I just know what

Were you shy as a kid? I had my times when I was shy. I couldn't just go on a stage and perform. I meet a lot of rappers now. They always say, "How are you not shy playing in front of all them people?" I'm like, "Dude, you gotta go on stage and rap in front of all them people. It's really not a difference. I love basketball. You love rapping."

Coach Stevens told me that when things don't go your way, you get hungrier. Where do

you think that comes from? Why is it when you face challenges it suddenly makes you

That's just part of my life. The way I play is the way I was brought up. I'm from Youngstown, Ohio-

for themselves. Everything is a part of my childhood. My rebounding comes from me playing that

but I grew up at a recreation center. I was the smallest guy. We always played a game of 33. Everybody

game. I had to play with bigger guys. I had to push and get my own rebounds. Nobody felt sorry for me. Nothing was given to me. I was never ranked. Nobody really knew who Terry Rozier was when I was young. All I need is that opportunity. I don't care about no rankings. I don't care if a guy has been spoon fed. You still have to

go through me when we playing in between them lines. And I'm hungry. I want it. I'm trying to destroy

you. I don't care if I'm playing one-on-one with my son, with my little brother. You gotta set that for

At the rec center, I'd be there by myself. Lights shut off. [I] always had access to the gym. I used to

make sure I'd get in there when nobody else could. I used to just fall. I loved D-Wade. D-Wade is my

I read somewhere that you used to practice throwing yourself on the court?

idol. I'd go crazy over him when I was young—he and Michael Vick. D-Wade had a commercial, "Fall six times, get up seven." He used to always fall a lot. I'd throw up a crazy shot and just fall. Get up, practice it again. That's just who I was. Everybody used to say, "Why is he falling?" You were saying that you notice yourself getting recognized a lot more. Was there a moment where you had to pinch yourself: "Damn, I got recognized by that guy?" Man, Urkel. We were out to eat in LA. He was with his bodyguards. He got up to leave and he tapped

me. "You had a great year." Everybody knows who Steve Urkel is. That was nuts. It's been crazy all

summer. People can take it two ways. They can either be satisfied or it can be a thing where, "I want

this to happen forever." It's definitely humbling and it's a blessing. I want this to always be like this.

If I tell you it was fun, or it was good, I'd be lying. It was depressing. It was everything that a person

that wants to be in the NBA-wants to do good in the NBA-doesn't wanna do. It was a reality check for me. It was something that I needed. I couldn't even get a bottle of water when I wanted it down there. Reality set back in. Sometimes you need to fall on your face to know: You got drafted but you still got a lot of work to do. Was there any doubt that creeped in? I think I probably went through a little bit. Questioning, "Why am I here?" Obviously I understand

[the Celtics] had a lot of guards. When you meet with an NBA team [before the draft, they ask,] "How

round. I got drafted 16th. [But I've] always got that in my mind. I'm going to stand out. I'm a stand out

type of guy because I deserve it. I work hard. It's going to get noticed. If it's not by you, it's going to get

would you feel going out to the G League?" You answer, "Yeah, I'd be fine. I'll go out and do what I

gotta do." When reality hits, nobody wants to be in the G League, especially if you get drafted first

Let's use Nike, for example. I first got drafted and I was basically trying to tell them it was either Nike or Adidas. I was trying to get more love from Nike. I was trying to tell them, "I know you got these guys that you're high on, y'all got your favorites. But I'm going to blow up." I know I'm going to end up standing out. Sometimes you gotta go through rough things. Sometimes you gotta do it. But I know the

noticed by the next guy.

up.

do crazy.

it?

When did that happen?

Probably like two weeks ago.

You went and picked him up?

You played in the G League in Maine—what was that like?

you up? That was three years ago. I know I had it in my mind that I wanted to do something different. I was wearing Nike all season but I wasn't with them or nothing. That thing happened with Adidas where I wore some Jordans when I wasn't supposed to. They got mad at me for wearing Vans. I wore Filas before. That was three strikes. They took me off, or whatever. At this point it's like, F Adidas. I don't care for Adidas. As far as the Nike thing that happened a couple years ago. You got them top guys, like I explained, you

got KD, Lebron, Kyrie Irving. Then Adidas got their top guys, Andrew Wiggins, Jaylen Brown, John

this is dope." I seen their vision and the crazy stuff they wanna do. I'm like, this is me. We under

Wall. Puma, they just started. They brought me in for a meeting. I seen the shoes and I'm like, "Okay,

Adidas and Nike. Them the two favorites. We can do some even more crazier stuff. We got leeway to

What's that like to think about the background you came from and now you're flying on

I think it sits in with my friends and my brothers more than it do me. It hits them crazy, "Damn, we

love you. This was never supposed to be this way." As far as for me, I have them times where I'm by

came from nothing." They always remind me sometimes when it be a crazy night or something. "Bro, I

a Puma jet? That must be kind of a wild thing to put in perspective?

What are some other things Coach tells you?

"What you doing, Terry? This is a blessing. Get it right."

man above me being me, the stuff I've seen. I know I can handle things and bounce back and just go

How much of your decision to go to Puma was informed by the fact that Nike didn't pick

myself or I think, "Damn that was crazy what we just did." Coach [Stevens] says a lot of things that stick with me. He always says, "Never get too high. Never get too low. Just stay in the moment." I try to stay in the moment. I know I'll have my time where I can really sit down and think about what happened, where I come from and how the blessing comes now. Right now I just don't wanna be chilling like, "Damn, I'm on a Puma jet." I wanna let everything keep happening fast before I even blink my eyes. Let the blessings keep coming.

"Control what you can control." He's great at just connecting with people—don't matter what

background you come from. He's so involved. I can be down about some things. He just reminds me,

When was the last time you were down about something and how did he pull you out of

I remember when Kyrie went down, I was in the gym shooting by myself. This was probably a couple

hours before practice or something. I just remember him telling me-looking me in my eyes, you can just tell it came from the heart—he was just like, "You ready?" Like: You're just as good as those guys. Don't think for a second that you're not. Don't take a back seat to no one. You gotta play the top guards if the playoff runs happen. He's not saying all this but I know this is what he's thinking. Be ready.

I'm happy I got the opportunity. At the same time, I got a feeling for Kyrie. Everybody was counting us out. Teams were trying to lose on purpose to play us, to drop to seven seed to play us. It's just like, the whole world is watching now. When opportunity come knocking at the door, you gotta answer. I wanted to ask you about your dad, if you're okay with that. Is he out of prison? Yeah, he's out.

Don't think too much. Just go out there and have fun. This is what you want.

Yeah, I picked him up in a nice Sprinter van that my guy drives back at home. [My dad] did eight years around the time I was born. Then he just did another 15. Just going to pick him up and seeing him walk outta there knowing that he's never going back-or that he won't have to make them choices to go back-it was just a stress reliever. I have my dad now. I never had my dad around.

He did them eight years and he got out when I was young. I was probably 10. I remember that summer

because it was the first time I had my dad around. He had me running next to the car with my weight

vest, getting ready for football. We always put on the gloves, did some boxing. We didn't do the craziest dad and son things, but just to have that was great. Then he went back in. When he went in for the second time, I was living with him when it happened. A lot of people don't know that. Then to go pick him up 15 years later after that, it was just a blessing.

YouTube that he could. He got to catch some games on TV, in the playoffs. You get to watch TV a little bit in there. What did he say to you when he got out?

He [was] just taking it all in. He don't know how to feel or how to act. He just relaxing. You're free now

after [doing] eight, get out a little bit, then do 15. I couldn't even imagine how that feels, being a free

man after that. You just trying to see how things work now. A lot of things is different now.

What's that feel like to be able to think about your dad being at a game?

He's learning how to work his phone and get his house and stuff together. He watched every video on

It's gonna be crazy. I would never [imagine that]. I say the same thing about me going to get him. Now that happened. Him coming to the game is about to be even crazier. What have you learned from him?

Not to go to jail, and mess up your life. You can not be in your son's life. A lot of kids broke down not having their father, or their father being in jail. They don't mess with their father. I just know he was probably put in a bad situation. It don't shape him as a person. It don't mean that I can't mess with him. He's my father.

I don't wanna ever put my son in the situation where he's calling somebody else dad or something like that. He out there in this crazy world by himself. I think that was the biggest lesson of my just seeing

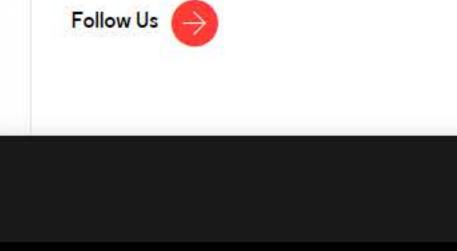
him, me being around him right after he did that eight. Then him going to do the 15. That's something that I don't ever wanna do. I always used him as motivation for me not to do the negatives. Keep going with the positives. Now I got a son. I don't ever wanna not have him be able to call me when he can, or not have him come see me. That's just the most important lesson. This interview has been edited and condensed.

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